



*Embassy of the United States of America  
Muscat, Oman*

## **DISPOSITION OF REMAINS**

The following is current information on Omani law and practice regarding the disposition of remains.

### **A. Maximum Period before Internment**

For Omani citizens, local customs and law demand that unembalmed remains be buried within 24 hours of death. For expatriates, the remains may be kept at one of the city's three mortuaries until arrangements are made to transport the deceased to burial abroad, bury the deceased locally or arrange for cremation in Sohar. Generally, the deceased must be buried within seven days of embalming.

### **B. Required Documents**

In order to process the deceased for transportation and/or local burial, the following documents are required in the order below:

1. A death notification from the hospital where the deceased died or was taken
2. An endorsed death notification from the Department of Human Medicals at the Royal Oman Police (ROP) Hospital
3. A death certificate (exchanged for the endorsed death notification) from the Statistics Office across from the international airport
4. A no objection letter from the deceased's embassy for embalming, autopsy and transport
5. A no objection letter from the local police station that registered the death to transport of the deceased
6. A letter from the sponsor to Qaboos Port Customs Department asking them to attend on the day of the deceased's travel
7. A letter from the sponsor to the local police station that registered the death requesting customs to attend on the day of the deceased's travel
8. Twelve photocopies of all of the original documents to be submitted.

### **C. Undertakers in Oman**

Several companies and individuals can transport the deceased and assist with obtaining the necessary documents. Their contact details and estimated fees follow:

1. **Murtafat Al Awabi Trading, Wadi Kabir:** Contact Amjad Sarwar at 2481-0743 or 9938-5913, or Waseem Sarwar at 9955-7730. The cost is R.O. 350 (approximately USD 910) and includes documentation, coffin cost, sealing the coffin, and transportation of the remains to the airport.
2. **Shwamiah Trading at Ghalah:** Contact Mohamed Asgar or Mohamed Khalil at 2459-0453 or 9931-8439. Their services include providing and sealing the coffin, and transportation of

the remains to the airport. Depending on the type of coffin selected, the cost varies from R.O. 100 to 250 (approximately USD 260 to 650).

3. **Al Harjaf Enterprises, Hamriyah-Itty Road (near Oman Halwa):** Contact Said Al Omairi at 9987-0003, Mohammed at 9238-9799, or Murli at 9517-1358. Their services include providing and sealing the coffin and transportation of the remains to the airport. Depending on the type of coffin selected, the cost varies from R.O. 120 to 350 (approximately USD 312 to 910).

#### **D. Storage and Embalming**

There are no independent funeral homes in Oman. In the Muscat area, the mortuaries of Khoula Hospital in Mina Al Fahal, the Royal Oman Police (ROP) Hospital in Qurum or the Royal Hospital in Bowsher ordinarily handle storage and embalming.

**1. The Khoula Hospital** has the capacity to store 12 corpses. For information on available space, call Mr. Abdullah Al Khaduri at 9944-2992 (fax 2456-3578) or the Patient Services Duty Officer at 2456-3578. To make an appointment for embalming, please contact Mr. Salim Al Bulushi at 2456-5758 between 7:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. from Saturday to Wednesday. Khoula Hospital does embalming between 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. from Saturday to Wednesday and requires:

- a) An endorsed death notification from the Department of Human Medicals at the Royal Oman Police Hospital, and
- b) A no objection letter from the deceased's embassy.

Upon presentation of the above documents, Khoula Hospital will give you an appointment date for the embalming and a form to request it. Please type the request form and give it to the authorities on the day of the embalming, along with the embalming fee of R.O. 100 (approximately USD 260).

Khoula Hospital can assist with contacting the ROP and customs officers for witnessing the closing of the coffin. Closing of the coffin requires the presence of the ROP, a customs agent and a technician, who will seal the coffin. Please speak to Mr. Abdullah Al Khaduri of the Patient Services Department at 9944-2992 (fax 2456-3578) or the Patient Services Duty Officer at 2456-3578.

**2. The ROP Hospital** has the capacity to store 30 corpses. For information on available space and embalming procedures, please call Dr. Ahmed Al Sabri of the Forensics Department at 2468-3167 or 9932-2270. The ROP Hospital conducts autopsies free of charge. Embalming costs approximately R.O. 120 (approximately USD 312).

**3. The Royal Hospital** has the capacity to store 12 corpses. It does not do embalming. If the deceased is located at the Royal Hospital, you will need permission from the police station that opened the case to transport the deceased to Khoula Hospital for embalming and eventual repatriation. To speak to the Director of Patient Services and Public Relations, call Kamal Al Lawati at 2459-9776 or 9938-0299 (fax 2459-9778).

#### **E. Autopsies**

Omani law requires an autopsy if a death is due to a criminal act and may require an autopsy in certain other cases, such as deaths resulting from suspicious traffic accidents. However, if a

patient dies in the hospital, Omani authorities normally do not require an autopsy. If an autopsy is not required, the family of the deceased may request it.

If someone dies at home, it is important not to move him or her so the police may properly investigate the circumstances of the death.

If the ROP orders an autopsy and the family of the deceased objects, the family may request a waiver through Dr. Ahmed Sabri of the ROP Hospital's Forensics Department at 2468-3167 or 9932-2270 or from the ROP Hospital's Director General of Medical Services at 2460-3367 or 9936-9000. Dr. Al Sabri is authorized to issue certificates of death in these cases. If the police waive the autopsy requirement, obtain a mortuary release certificate from the ROP Hospital.

## **F. Cremation**

Islamic law does not permit cremation, but local law does. The Hindhu Mahajan Association owns the only crematorium in Oman. It is located in Sohar, approximately 230 kilometers from Muscat. This crematorium disposes of remains in accordance with Hindu rites. The Hindhu Mahajan Association is willing to extend this service to others of non-Hindu faith upon application by the relevant embassy. Please contact B.D. Pandya at 2478-3257, 2479-2170 or 9920-8021, or Vinod Dulgaj at 2479-2170 or 9967-6486 with the following documents for cremation:

1. Notification of death stamped by the ROP
2. Copy of the death certificate stamped by the ROP
3. No-objection letter from deceased's embassy
4. No-objection letter from the deceased's next-of-kin
5. No-objection letter from the deceased's local sponsor
6. Copy of deceased's passport, resident card and photograph
7. Letter from ROP to Sohar Development Authorities requesting cremation assistance.

Please note that the employer or relative is responsible for transportation of the remains to the Sohar cremation site.

In very rare cases of death resulting from a contagious disease, Omani law may require cremation. In such a case, the Khoula Hospital will help make the necessary arrangements. The local sponsor (employer) must pay for (or arrange payment for) transportation and body handlers.

## **G. Exportation of Remains**

If someone dies in a police district outside of Muscat, his or her sponsor must obtain a transportation permit from the local police in that district to move the deceased to the capital area for completion of the rest of the procedures. The sponsor must provide a no objection letter from the embassy of the deceased's country of nationality authorizing shipment of the body to Muscat and must also make arrangements with the capital area police to receive the body.

To obtain approval for repatriation of remains, submit the death certificate to the concerned embassy, get the relevant embassy to provide a letter stating that it has no objection to the body being repatriated, and then present the death certificate and no objection letter to the police.

station that has jurisdiction over the area where the death occurred. The police station will issue a release letter.

Before the Khoula Hospital embalms the deceased, you must notify officials at Port Sultan Qaboos Customs Section and the Wattaya Station, as they both must witness the sealing of the coffin at the hospital. You may contact the Port Sultan Qaboos Customs Section Duty Officer at 2471-4626 and the Wattaya Station at 2456-0021. At this point, coordination is critical. A carpenter/welder from the firm supplying the coffin must seal it. The police supervise the sealing of the coffin, and customs officials provide final clearance for the departure of the body.

Before the ROP Hospital embalms the deceased, the ROP will arrange a customs and police officer to witness the sealing of the coffin at the hospital. Please contact Dr. Ahmed Sabri of the ROP Hospital's Forensics Department at 2468-3167 or 9932-2270 to assist with the arrangements. A carpenter/welder must be present to seal the coffin. As with Khoula hospital, the police supervise the sealing of the coffin and customs officials provide final clearance for the departure of the body.

Documents required for exporting the remains are:

1. Death certificate
2. No objection letter from deceased's embassy for repatriating the remains
3. Sultanate of Oman customs and police certificates regarding the contents of the coffin and the sealing of the container.
4. Quarantine port officer's certificate regarding the absence of quarantinable or infectious diseases at the time of death
5. Embalming and sealing certificate.

Each of the above documents must bear the signatures of the representatives of 1) the director general of customs, 2) the commissioner of police and 3) the medical officer at the Khoula Hospital or the ROP Hospital.

Originals and 12 copies of the above documents, along with the deceased's canceled passport and the airway bill of the shipping carrier issued by the airline agent, should accompany the deceased to the airport.

You must make travel arrangements so the deceased's remains may be shipped as soon as possible after embalming. At all times, the employer or family must provide transportation and handlers.

## **H. Repatriation Costs**

You will find below approximate airfreight costs associated with repatriation of remains to points in the U.S. Note: One Omani Rial (R.O.) equals about U.S. Dollars (USD) 2.60. These rates are subject to change. Land transportation is not included. For confirmation, you may contact Mr. Rajan or Kamil at Inchcape Shipping Services representatives at 2451-0103 or by fax at 2451-0260.

<b>Muscat to</b>	<b>Rate/Kg. in R.O.</b>	<b>Rate/Kg. in USD</b>	<b>Estimate based on average weight of coffin (150 kilograms or 330 pounds)</b>
Atlanta	5.702 RO	14.83 USD	2224.5 USD
Chicago	5.702 RO	14.83 USD	2224.5 USD
Dallas	6.132 RO	15.94 USD	2391 USD
Houston	6.132 RO	15.94 USD	2391 USD
Indianapolis	5.782 RO	15.03 USD	2254.5 USD
Los Angeles	6.062 RO	15.76 USD	2364 USD
New York	5.577 RO	14.50 USD	2175 USD
San Francisco	6.062 RO	15.76 USD	2364 USD
Seattle	6.062 RO	15.76 USD	2364 USD
Washington, D.C.	5.577 RO	14.50 USD	2175 USD

**Note: Additional charges (i.e. Oman Aviation special handling, airway bill fee, agency handling and documentation) of RO 65.000 (approximately USD 169.00) apply per shipment.**

#### **I. Exhumation and shipment**

Oman does not permit exhumation.

#### **J. Burial**

Burial for Muslims may take place in various locations throughout the Sultanate. For Christians and others, there is only one location, in the capital area at Ras El Hamra, within the Petroleum Development of Oman (PDO) compound. The contact at PDO is Murtadha Al Lawati; you may reach him at 2467-7629 or 9931-7088. If he is unavailable, you may contact Ali Harthy or anyone else at 2467-2222. PDO donated the grounds and maintains the cemetery, although in theory the Christian Cemetery Committee oversees the burial ground. This committee is voluntary and includes senior representatives of various firms in Oman, a representative of the Ministry of Defense, and chaplains from both the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Church in Ruwi. Thus, the ground is considered hallowed for all Christian faiths.

The cost of burial is R.O. 200 (USD 520.00) for an adult, R.O. 75 (USD 194) for a child between one and years old, and R.O. 50 (USD 130.00) for a child under a year old. The price includes all fees for digging the grave, labor, filling in the grave and maintenance. You must make private arrangements for a priest, transport of the deceased, a coffin and a tombstone.

You should submit the following documents to PDO representatives for burial:

1. Complete burial registration form (You may obtain a copy from PDO or the consular section of the U.S. Embassy.)
2. Copy of the death certificate
3. No objection letter from the ROP for burial (This may be indicated on the death certificate, or be a separate letter.)
4. No objection letter from deceased's embassy
5. No objection letter from deceased's next of kin.

The tombstone is extra and you may order it from Sun Technical and Services LLC. Contact Mohamed Arif Surti at 2460-3793 or -9938-2380 for information on types of tombstones and prices.